

Message Text

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PAGE 01 RANGOO 00826 300232Z

43

ACTION SS-30

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R 300145Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7842

INFO AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

C O N F I D E N T I A L RANGOON 0826

EXDIS

EA AND E/B ONLY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG BM

SUBJECT: BURMESE OFFSHORE OIL NEGOTIATIONS

REF: (A) RANGOON 783; (B) RANGOON 708

1. REFTELS INDICATE THAT GUB IS DICKERING WITH CONSORTIUM OF CITIES SERVICE, SUN OIL AND ROBRAY FOR FIRST OFFSHORE PRODUCTION-SHARING AGREEMENT AND POSSIBLY (THOUGH WE THINK UNLIKELY) FOR EXPLORATION RIGHTS TO MOST OF BURMESE OFFSHORE AREA. THIS GROUP APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN SELECTED BY NE WIN (POSSIBLY WITH ADVICE OF NEW MINES MINISTER DR. NYI NYI) ALTHOUGH RANKED RELATIVELY LOW BY MYANMA OIL CORPORATION ON BASIS OF ITS EXTENSIVE DEALINGS WITH AND EVALUATIONS OF FOREIGN OIL COMPANIES.

2. IN VIEW OF PREPONDERANTLY US CHARACTER OF THIS GROUP, WE WOULD ORDINARILY BE GRATIFIED, REGARDING CHOICE AMONG US COMPANIES AS ONE FOR GUB AND OF NO CONSEQUENCE TO US. IN BURMESE CONTEXT, HOWEVER, WE MUST RECALL THAT GUB FREQUENTLY TENDS TO LOOK TO GOVERNMENTS FOR SATISFACTION IN CONNECTION WITH ITS DEALINGS EVEN WITH PRIVATE COMPANIES, A TENDENCY WHICH HAS BEEN ENCOURAGED BY QUASI-OFFICIAL NATURE OF GUB RELATIONSHIP WITH SOME WEST GERMAN AND JAPANESE COMPANIES. IN ADDITION, RESULTS OF FIRST OFFSHORE OIL CONTRACT OR TWO, AND PERFORMANCE OF CON-

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PAGE 02 RANGOO 00826 300232Z

TRACTORS, WILL BE CRUCIAL FACTOR IN DETERMINING WHETHER TREND

TOWARD ADDITIONAL FOREIGN PARTICIPATION IN BURMESE ECONOMY CONTINUES.

3. ALTHOUGH WE HAVE NO REASON TO BELIEVE OPERATIONS IN BURMA OF CITIES SERVICE AND ASSOCIATES WILL FALL SHORT OF GUB EXPECTATIONS, FOR REASON PARA TWO, WE WOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR FRANK VIEWS OF DEPT AND INFO ADDRESSEES ON WHETHER THEIR OPERATIONS ELSEWHERE HAVE GIVEN ANY GROUNDS FOR SUCH BELIEF.

4. BECAUSE OF POSSIBLY UNFAVORABLE IMPLICATIONS WHICH MIGHT BE INCORRECTLY DRAWN FROM FOREGOING INQUIRY, REQUEST ALL ADDRESSEES HANDLE THIS TELEGRAM WITH MAXIMUM CIRCUMSPECTION.
OSBORN

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